

Bahrke returns to podium; this time in World Cup moguls

By USSA

INAWASHIRO, Japan – Olympic bronze medalist Shannon Bahrke (Tahoe City, CA) took to the podium again Sunday, notching a third place in Japan during a World Cup dual moguls competition riddled with heavy fog and delays. The men's event was canceled.

"It's been crazy all week. We haven't been able to see while we're training. Today we got up there at 9:45 and weren't able to ski until 2:30," Bahrke said. "But I just put down the best podium I could and I got third."

For Bahrke, who plans to retire following this season, to be able to succeed on such a challenging course on her last competition in Japan was a reward.

"This course, I have always had so much respect for it because it is the hardest course on tour. I think I podiumed here once," Bahrke said. "To be here for the last time in my career here in Japan and to have a podium is cool. I brought a little bit of that Olympic spirit here."

Bahrke was third on the course in Japan during a moguls competition in 2001.

The World Cup was won by Japan's Aiko Uemura, who had the fastest run of the day. Canada's silver medalist in the sport, Jennifer Heil, took second place while Bahrke went head-to-head with teammate Heather McPhie (Bozeman, MT), who landed in fourth.

According to U.S. Moguls Coach Garth Hagar, Bahrke and McPhie were forced to sit in the start gate for over an hour,

awaiting the fog to clear the course. Given the warmer temperature, fog and the technicality of the course itself, Hagar said it was an accomplishment for Bahrke to ace her run – her first completion of the course since landing in Japan.

“This is the most challenging course due to the steepness and changing conditions,” Hagar said. “Shannon said she was happy to ski her first top to bottom for her contest run.”

Other U.S. women skied notably well with Eliza Outtrim (Steamboat Springs, CO) landing 11th and Laurel Shanley (Squaw Valley, CA) finishing 14th.

The men’s competition was looking strong for the U.S. with Olympic bronze medalist Bryon Wilson (Butte, MT) sitting in second when, with only 15 skiers left to complete the competition, officials were forced to cancel the competition due to foggy conditions.

The men, along with the women, will have another shot at competing on the World Cup when freestyle moguls heads to Are, Sweden on March 12. The series wraps up the following weekend in Spain.

Freestyle World Cup Inawashiro, Japan, March 7, Dual Moguls

Women

1. Aiko Uemura, Japan, 23.00
2. Jennifer Heil, Canada, 22.73
3. Shannon Bahrke, Tahoe City, CA, 22.20
4. Heather McPhie, Bozeman, MT, 21.45
5. Margarita Marbler, Austria, 20.84
-
11. Eliza Outtrim, Steamboat Springs, CO, 18.33

14. Laurel Shanley, Squaw Valley, CA, 17.00